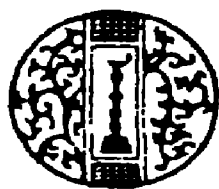




Maulana Abul Kalam Azad  
Memorial Lecture  
1959

INDIA  
TODAY & TOMORROW

by  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU  
PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA



Indian Council for Cultural Relations  
New Delhi

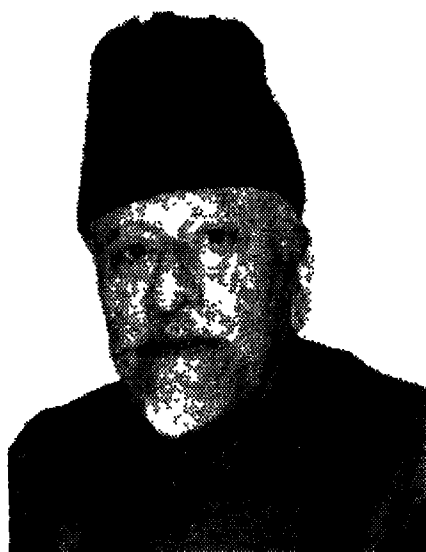
**The Maulana Azad Memorial Lecture 1959**  
**INDIA**  
**TODAY AND TOMORROW**

§ 2002, Indian Council for Cultural Relations

First Print 1959  
Reprint 2002

Published by  
**Suryakanthi Tripathi**  
Director General,  
Indian Council for Cultural Relations  
Azad Bhavan  
Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi-110002

Printed at:  
**Sita Fine Arts Pvt. Ltd.**  
A-22, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase II,  
New Delhi 110028  
Tel. : 011-5895100  
E-mail : printer@vsnl.com

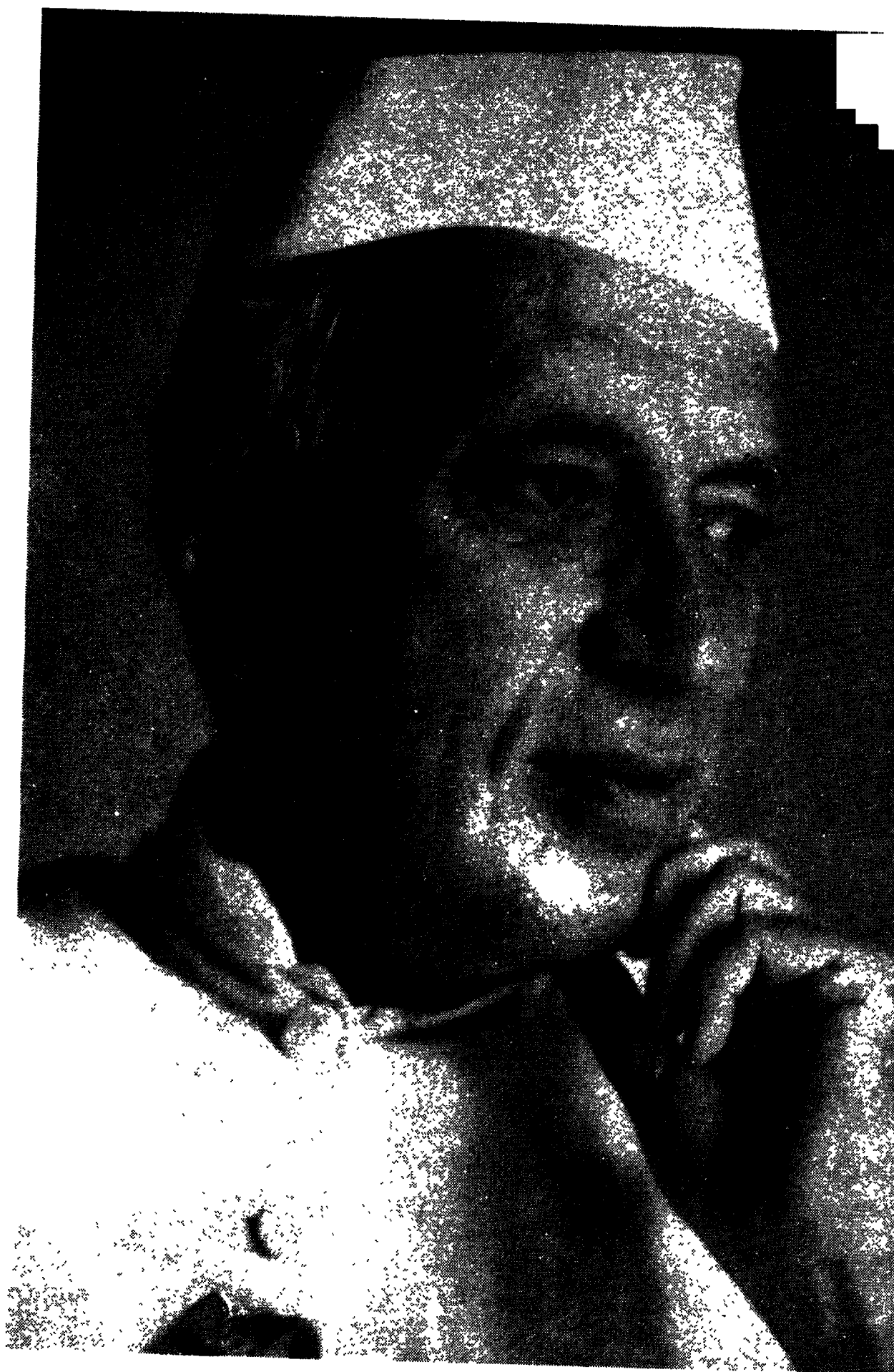


## **The Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Memorial Lecture**

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations is an autonomous body set up by the Government of India in 1950 with a view to establishing, reviving and strengthening cultural relations between India and other countries.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first President of the Council, was a multi-faceted personality: a great humanist, a freedom fighter and an eminent scholar. In his memory, Indian Council for Cultural Relations instituted the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Memorial Lecture Series with a view to promoting a better understanding among the different peoples of the world. The first lecture was delivered by Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, in 1959.

Eminent speakers from India and abroad have participated in this distinguished series of lectures to speak on subjects of importance to humanity at large and, in particular, to the people of India.



JAWAHARLAL NEHRU  
PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA  
(1947-1964)

In inviting Shri Jawaharlal Nehru to deliver the Inaugural Address of the Maulana Azad Lectures, I cannot help referring to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's contribution to life and letters in India in many fields. He attained eminence as a brilliant writer and theologian in his early youth, but the qualities which made this achievement possible did not allow him to rest for long in the purely academic field. The spirit of free enquiry and search for truth led him inevitably into the political movement. From his early twenties, he was a fighter for the independence of India, for he had already realized that man cannot attain a true and full development except in an atmosphere of freedom. The Indian people did him the honour of electing him the President of the Indian National Congress when he was only thirtyfive. Later, during the most critical period of the struggle for freedom, he guided the destinies of the Congress for six momentous years. He was President of the Congress during the struggle of 1942 as well as in the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Wavell and the British Cabinet Mission.

It was the love of freedom which converted the scholarly Maulana Azad into an intrepid political fighter. It was the same love which made him an outspoken champion of rationalism and progressiveness in all spheres of Indian life. He sought to approach social, economic and political as well as moral and religious questions from a detached and dispassionate point of view. Freedom and equity were for him the guiding principles of life and he sought to realise them for all sections of the Indian people regardless of language, religion or caste.

The two outstanding qualities of his mind were the great clarity of his thought and the balance and sobriety of his judgement. He could go immediately to the heart of a problem and ignore all unimportant or extraneous issues. This capacity to pick out the essentials was accompanied by

a scrupulous sense of justice and fairplay. He never took a one-sided view of any matter and was always willing to make allowances for those who differed from him. His like or dislike of a person rarely, if ever, swayed his judgement. His intellectual detachment and his ability to take into consideration various points of view gave a peculiar weight to whatever he said.

Maulana Azad was essentially a scholar who had been dragged into politics by the force of circumstances. Nothing reveals the scholar so clearly in him as the way in which he tried to shun publicity. Political leaders—in India or elsewhere—generally derive their strength from their contacts with the masses but Maulana Azad was essentially a recluse who preferred the seclusion of his study to the arena of politics. His shy and retiring nature endeared him all the more to the Indian people. The stupendous demonstration of public grief and admiration which followed his death has never been equalled except on the occasion of Gandhiji's martyrdom.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations has lost in him not only its Founder President but also one who inspired its activities from the very inception. As a mark of honour to his memory, the Council has decided to institute a series of lectures entitled the "Azad Memorial Lectures" and invite for the purpose eminent scholars from India or abroad to speak on some problem affecting human welfare and development with special reference to India. Maulana Azad was a humanist whose interests extended to every aspect of human thoughts, feeling and action. It is the Council's hope that these series of lectures will make a significant contribution in promoting better understanding among different peoples and relieve some of the tensions which have accumulated in the world today.

We are singularly fortunate that Shri Jawaharlal Nehru has agreed to deliver the first series of these lectures. It is not for me to speak of his status as a statesman and writer of international fame, but I would like to refer to the utter sincerity which is his outstanding characteristic as a thinker,

writer and man of action. For him, to think is to feel and to feel is to act. Such swiftness of response may puzzle and at times irritate slower minds, but is evidence of the *transparent sincerity in which there is often no room for second thoughts*. For Pandit Nehru, experience and expression are almost always simultaneous.

Sincerity makes for integration of personality and this is the secret of Pandit Nehru's resilience and strength. Imprisonment is always a test of character, less for the physical suffering it involves than for the strain it imposes upon a man's balance of mind. Shut off from normal activities and denied the opportunity of meeting his fellows, a man is thrown back upon the resources of his own feeling, thought and will. Forced inactivity imposes a terrible strain, which is directly proportionate to the vitality and energy of the man. This explains why so many political leaders suffer a breakdown of health, if not of spirit, while in jail. Pandit Nehru has gone through his prison life almost unscathed. This was possible only because of the integration of imagination, thought and will in his personality. When the will had no outlet in movement and deed, imagination made the life of thought and emotion equally real to him.

An artist's sensitiveness distinguishes all Pandit Nehru's political acts and utterances. Artists are proverbially shy and self-centered, and yet, by a curious law of psychological compensation, they love to display their thoughts and emotions before their fellow men. They are generally content to express in line, colour or words their reactions to the stimuli of the outer world. In some rare cases, however, the reaction is so strong that expression alone does not satisfy them. They seek to enter the arena of public life and change the environment into which they were born. The artist is then merged in the political fighter, but even in the midst of strife and struggle the mantle of the artist clings to him. History has rarely brought upon the stage a more perfect specimen of the artist in public life than Jawaharlal Nehru.

Greatness in any sphere has in it an element of paradox. It is the combination of contraries that gives richness and complexity to genius. It is, therefore, not surprising that the scientific temper is as marked in Pandit Nehru as the artistic temperament. He has always struggled to bring into his study of men and affairs the impersonal and objective attitude of science. His searching, critical and questing spirit makes it difficult for him to take a one-sided view and if this has at times made him hesitant in following a course of action to the bitter end, it has given to his thought, writing and action a breadth of vision and sanity that distinguishes the essential man of science.

The transience of time and the inevitability of decay fill us with a sense of the tragedy of all being. No sensitive soul can escape that feeling, but the heroic spirit seeks to transcend sorrow and despair by its insistence on the dignity of man. The great leader is he who has walked in the valley of the shadow of death but never forgotten the shining peaks that lie beyond. Pandit Nehru invokes in us an awareness of values that demand the qualities of fortitude, courage and endurance in the face of suffering and death. His writings and his acts are full of this sense of human dignity. This was the silken thread which bound him so closely to Maulana Azad and has made him perhaps the truest representative of the broad and humanitarian aspects of Indian culture.

If unity in diversity is the essence of the Indian spirit, it is an essence that is equally valid, and indeed, imperative for the rest of the world. That is also why Pandit Nehru's vision of *India Today and Tomorrow* has a special significance not only to Indians whom he invites to accept the challenge of a new birth but to sensitive men and women throughout the world.

I have great pleasure in requesting Shri Jawaharlal Nehru to deliver the Inaugural Address of the Azad Memorial Lectures

New Delhi,  
22 February, 1959.

(Humayun Kabir).

# I

I must begin with an apology. Even though I have been connected for a long time with public affairs and speak often in public, I am totally unaccustomed to delivering a lecture of the kind I am expected to give today. Such a lecture should be thoughtful and scholarly, and a good deal of time should be devoted to its preparation. Apart from my inexperience in such matters, I have found it very difficult, during the Budget Session of Parliament and because of my day to day activities which consume a great deal of time, to do justice to this occasion.

I was reluctant to accept this assignment but, in a moment of weakness, I agreed. I wished to pay my homage on this anniversary day of the passing away of Maulana Azad, to his memory which we cherish. I was fascinated also by the subject suggested to me for, in some form or other, the present and the future of India have filled my mind. At the same time, I was a little alarmed. This subject is too vital and I have been too much connected with the India of today to be able to take a dispassionate view. I crave, therefore, the indulgence of my listeners for this, my maiden effort at a lecture of this kind, prepared under the stress of heavy work and other circumstances.

To endeavour to understand and describe the India of today would be the task of a brave man, to say anything about tomorrow's India would verge on rashness. Indeed, at no time in the world's history has it been more difficult to forecast the future of any country or of the world. Events move at an incredible pace, and change follows change.

The superficial aspect of politics covers innumerable currents below the surface, sometimes erupting and upsetting the shape of things.

India today is the outcome not only of the immediate past, but also of the thousands of years of the long story of our country. Layer upon layer of thought, experience and action have conditioned us and made us what we are today. Those of my generation in India were especially moulded and conditioned by a series of events which are not likely to occur again. Not only did we come in contact with a great man and a mighty leader who shook us up completely, upset our lives and drew us out of the normal routine of living, but we also witnessed and participated in events of historic importance. We experienced repeatedly moments of high tension and emotional exaltation, and also the reaction to this in occasional frustration, almost akin to despair. Yet, this is not wholly correct for we escaped that feeling of mental and physical collapse which usually follows a nervous tension of high degree. There was always something to hold on to, a leader who was like a rock and a light-house, and a movement which thrilled us and called out the best in us. Those moments were often not pleasurable and were sometimes even painful, but there was always a sense of satisfaction and a feeling that we were engaged in great deeds and were marching in step with history. Thought and action went together, producing the sensation of a full life. What saved us, more than anything else, was a belief that we were functioning, even in political affairs, on an ethical plane and with high ideals. Hatred did not consume us as it does in conflicts and, more especially, in nationalist struggles

There was Gandhiji always before us and in our minds. But there were others too, giants among men, and there was the comradeship of innumerable men and women

whose stature had risen because they were allied to great causes and to a great leader. Among these giants of old, young in years, but always looked upon as a veteran and old in wisdom, was Maulana Azad. He occupied a special place in our movement and he represented to us, more than any one else, that synthesis of cultures for which India had always striven. He helped us to get out of the ruts of a narrow nationalism and enlarged our vision. It was strange that so many people, who differed greatly among themselves, should find a powerful common bond and should work together for a whole generation.

## II

What is India? That is a question which has come back again and again to my mind, and in my own amateurish way I sought a reply to it in her past and in the present. The early beginnings of our history filled me with wonder. It was the past of a virile and vigorous race with a questing spirit, an urge for free inquiry and, even in its earliest known period, giving evidence of a mature and tolerant civilization. Accepting life and its joys and burdens, it was ever searching for the ultimate and the universal. It built up a magnificent language, Sanskrit, and through this language and its art and architecture, it sent its vibrant message to far countries. It produced the Upanishads, the Gita and the Buddha.

Hardly any language in the world has played that vital part in the history of a race which Sanskrit has. It was not only the vehicle of the highest thought and some of the finest literature, but it became the uniting bond for

India, even though there were political divisions. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata were woven into the texture of millions of lives in every generation for thousands of years. I have often wondered that if our race forgot the Buddha, the Upanishads and the great epics, what then will it be like? It would be uprooted and would lose the basic characteristics which have clung to it and given it distinction throughout these long ages. India would cease to be India.

### III

Gradually deterioration set in, thought lost its freshness and became stale, the vitality and exuberance of youth gave place to crabbed age. Instead of the spirit of adventure there came lifeless routines, and the broad and exciting vision of the world was cabined and confined and lost in caste divisions, narrow social customs and ceremonials. Even so, India was vital enough to absorb the streams of people that flowed in to her mighty ocean of humanity, and she never quite forgot the thoughts that had stirred her in the days of her youthful vigour.

Subsequently, India was powerfully influenced by the coming of Islam and Muslim invasions. Western colonial powers followed, bringing a new type of domination, a new colonialism and, at the same time, the impact of fresh ideas and of the industrial civilization that was growing up in Europe. This period culminated, after a long struggle, in independence and now we face the future with all this burden of the past upon us and the confused dreams and stirrings of the future that we seek to build. We have all

these ages represented in us and in our country today. Organised power and energy are the symbols of the modern age. We have the growth of nuclear science in India and atomic energy, and we also have the cow-dung age. Thus every century is represented in this country and, in addition, there is enormous variety. Behind that variety there is the unity which has kept our people together through the ages in spite of misfortune and disaster. We are plunging into the world of science and technology and trying to organise our knowledge in such a way that it commands more of the forces of Nature, and we are held back not only by our poverty and under development, but also by some inherited ideas and customs. There is no future for us without science and technology. At the same time that future will be shallow and empty and without any real meaning if we ignore or forget our past.

#### IV

So, in the tumult and confusion of our time, we stand facing both ways, forward to the future and backwards to the past, being pulled in both directions. How can we resolve this conflict and evolve a structure of living which fulfils our material needs and, at the same time, sustains our mind and spirit? What new ideals or old ideals, varied and adapted to the new world, can we place before our people, and how can we galvanize them into wakefulness and action?

We have our particular problems in India. But we also share the major problems of a world which, for all its tremendous advance, appears to be losing faith in itself.

For the present, in India, we are rightly absorbed in economic progress, Five Year Plans, and a tremendous effort to raise our people's living standards. All this is essential and a pre-requisite for any other type of advance. But a doubt creeps into our minds. Is this by itself enough or is something else to be added on to it? The Welfare State is a worthwhile ideal, but it may well be rather drab, and the examples of States which have achieved that objective bring out new problems and difficulties, which are not solved by material advance alone or by a mechanical civilisation. Religion has played an important part in supplying some essential needs of human nature. But that type of religion has weakened its hold and is unable to meet the onslaught of science and rationalism. Whether religion is necessary or not, a certain faith in a worthwhile ideal is essential to give substance to our lives and to hold us together. We have to have a sense of purpose beyond the material and physical demands of our daily lives.

Socialism and Communism attempt to give this sense of purpose, but they have tended to develop dogmas of their own. Communists have become the metaphysicians of the present age.

Every society tries to find an equilibrium. Sometimes this is through conflict, sometimes by deliberate or unconscious attempt to achieve harmony. A primitive society which does not change much, lives in a rut, and thus has an equilibrium at a low level. A dynamic society produces tensions in the individual as well as in the community. If this is true, then the present tensions in the world indicate a tremendous dynamism, a striving for a new equilibrium and a new dimension in human existence. That should

hearten us if there was not an ever present fear that the weapons of the nuclear age might annihilate mankind.

We must look to the future and work for it purposively and with faith and vigour, at the same time we must keep our past inheritance and derive sustenance from it. Change is essential, but continuity is also necessary. The future has to be built on the foundations laid in the past and the present. To deny the past and break with it completely is to uproot ourselves and, sapless, dry up. It was the virtue of Gandhiji to keep his feet firmly planted in the rich traditions of our race and our soil and, at the same time, to function on the revolutionary plane. Many criticised him for what they called his acceptance of out-of-date economic theories or for his supporting some kind of traditionalism or even encouraging reactionary forces, and yet, any one who examines the broad sweep of his activities is overwhelmed by their revolutionary consequences. Whether we look at them in the political or the social field, we find some difficulty in recognising this because we have been brought up in the Western traditions of conflict. He knew that a true revolution comes from the people and not at the top, and that revolution must be essentially social. Many eminent social reformers came before him and succeeded in bringing about some minor changes or in building up a new sect, but Gandhiji talking in terms of Ram Rajya, brought revolution to millions of homes without people realising fully what was happening. He seldom condemned caste as a whole (though in his later days he did so to some extent), but by his insistence on the uplift of the Depressed Classes and the Untouchables, he undermined the entire caste system, and he did so deliberately, knowing the consequences. By his technique of political action, he vitalised hundreds of millions of

people, drove out fear from them, and produced in them self-respect and self-reliance. By his stress on the underprivileged and poverty-stricken, he forced all of us to think in terms of social justice. He did all this calmly and dispassionately, avoiding to a large extent, a sense of conflict. Above all, he laid stress on truth and peaceful means. Indeed, truth became a condition of living for him, and his dynamic action was allied always to truth. In doing so, he revived memories in our people of the basic principles which had enriched our race in the past. Thus he built on old foundations, and at the same time, oriented the structure towards the future. The fact that some of his economic or other approaches did not fit in with modern ideas or had only some temporary significance did not trouble him. He was always prepared to adapt himself to changing conditions, provided the base was sound.

It has always seemed to me remarkable how he could link the past with the present and even the future. And because he could do so, he could make his people advance step by step without a break, and also avoid conflict to a considerable extent. The most vital lesson that he taught us or made us remember afresh, was the importance of means. Ends were never enough by themselves for the ends were shaped by the means that led to them. If there is any basic truth in this principle and in his method of working, then we also have to build on the foundations he laid down. That does not mean a slavish following of everything that he said or did, which might have been suitable at one stage of our existence and is no longer appropriate today. We have also to adapt ourselves to changing circumstances, but the basic principles must continue to guide us.

## V

When Islam came to India in the form of political conquest, it brought conflict. It had a two-fold effect. On the one hand, it encouraged the tendency of Hindu society to shrink still further within its shell; on the other, it brought a breath of fresh air and fresh ideas, and thus had a certain rejuvenating influence. Hindu society had become a closed system unlike Buddhism, another great product of Indian thought. The Muslims who came from outside, brought their own closed system with them. Thus, two closed systems met; neither being strong enough to uproot or subdue the other. Political triumph did not lead to intellectual, moral or religious conquest. The old Indian tradition and faith were still strong and firm enough to resist the new influence. The Muslims came with a vigorous message of their own and could not easily be absorbed, as previous comers had been absorbed. Nor could they change the essential character of the Indian people. Hence the great problem that faced India during the medieval period was how these two closed systems, each with its strong root, could develop a healthy relationship. Wise rulers like Akbar and others realised that the only hope for the future lay in some kind of harmony being established.

The philosophy and the world outlook of the old Hindus was amazingly tolerant; and yet they had divided themselves up into numerous separate caste groups and hierarchies. The Muslims had to face a new problem, how to live with others as equals. In other countries where they had gone, their success was so great that this problem did not really arise. They came into conflict with Christendom and through hundreds of years the problem was never

solved. In India, slowly a synthesis was developed. But, before this could be completed, other influences came into play. Western nations developing industrially and becoming strong had the feeling of their essential superiority over others and lived apart, looking down upon those they governed. There was a far greater gulf between them and the Indians than there ever had been between Hindus and Muslims.

For the first time, India was subjected to colonial rule and governance from a distant and far off country. Previously, the invaders and conquerors who had come to India, had made India their home and did not look elsewhere; essentially they became Indians. Now, a new type of invasion took place which could find no roots in India. There was an impenetrable barrier between them and the people of the country, whether Hindus, Muslims or others.

Even so, the new liberal thought of the West and industrial processes began to affect the mind and life of India. A new nationalism developed, which was inevitably against colonialism and sought independence, and yet which was being progressively affected by the new industrial civilization as well as the language, literature and ways of the West. This influence was largely confined to a top layer of the people, the great mass sinking into greater poverty.

Ram Mohan Roy came, seeking some kind of a synthesis between old India and modern trends. Vivekananda brought back something of the vigour of old Indian thought and dressed it in a modern garb. Political and cultural movements grew up and culminated in Gandhi and Rabindra Nath Tagore.

In Europe there had been fierce conflict between science and traditional religion, and the cosmology of Christianity did not fit in at all with scientific theories. Science did not produce that sense of conflict in India and Indian philosophy could easily accept it without doing any vital injury to its basic conceptions. But the social structure of India became more and more incompatible with modern trends.

In India, as elsewhere, two forces developed—the growth of nationalism and the urge for social justice. Socialism and Marxism became the symbols of this urge for social justice and apart from their scientific content, had a tremendous emotional appeal for the masses. Marx was primarily moved by the ghastly conditions that prevailed in the early days of industrialisation in Western Europe. At that time there was no truly democratic structure of the State, and changes could hardly be made constitutionally. Hence revolutionary violence offered the only way to change. Marxism, therefore, inevitably thought in terms of a violent revolution. This was also in the tradition of Europe. Since then, however, political democracy has spread bringing with it possibility of peaceful change. There has also been a tremendous scientific and technological advance which has brought material prosperity within the reach of all. Capitalism itself today has undergone a great deal of change, though it maintains its basic features and tends towards monopolies and aggregations of economic power. The democratic structure of the State, organised labour and, above all, the urge for social justice as well as scientific and technological progress, have brought about this transformation. We see today capitalist countries which have achieved a very high material standard of living for all their people.

We see also a tremendous advance in material well-being and scientific and technological progress in the Soviet Union, achieved in a relatively short period of time. To say that this has been brought about chiefly by violence is not correct. There has been enough violence in other systems also. But, it is true, I think, that because of circumstances, there has been a good deal of violence and purges associated with the development of the Soviet Union. The greatest condemnation of this violence has come from the great leaders of the Soviet Union themselves.

## VI

International affairs are dominated today by the conflict between the Western Powers and the Communist Powers, more particularly, by the rivalry between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. And yet, in spite of the manifest differences, there is an amazing similarity between these two Super Powers. They have both developed a high degree of industrial and mechanical civilisation; they believe in the ever-growing power of the machine and its capacity to solve human problems. Both their peoples are friendly and hospitable and attached to peace. The real difference today is between the developed countries and those that are still under-developed. To these latter has come the realisation that only through scientific and industrial growth, can they achieve any kind of progress or get rid of the tremendous material ills that they suffer from. To that end they strive, with more or less success, for the task is a hard one. In Europe, an economic

revolution preceded a real political revolution, and so when the latter came, certain resources had been built up by economic changes. In Asia, political revolution came first, followed immediately by demands for social betterment, which could not easily be fulfilled because of economic backwardness and lack of resources. The problems of underdeveloped countries were different from those that had already been industrialised and had built up an apparatus for large scale production. It is obvious that these under-developed countries could not go through the long processes which had industrialised Europe and America. There was constant social pressure which might well upset the political fabric unless the people were given something to satisfy their longings. Then there was also the pressure of rapidly growing populations which consumed whatever greater production was made, leaving little room for saving or investment for further advance. The basic problem thus became one of how in an under-developed and poverty-stricken country, surpluses could be created for investment and greater production. Every such attempt meant a greater burden on the masses. And yet, those very masses claimed relief from their existing burdens.

Coercive methods could be employed. But, in the final analysis, even coercion cannot go far in the case of masses of people unless it is allied to hope for the future. Thus, essentially, incentives for greater effort had in any event to be provided, and some realisable objective had to be placed before the people which gave them this hope for the future. That future could not be too distant. In a democratic society, everything depends on its capacity to rouse the people to greater effort by offering such hope and incentives, as well as a progressive amelioration of their lot.

Among the under-developed countries, India is perhaps more advanced than most others. During the last few years, there has been definite progress made in building up a base for industrialisation in improving agriculture, and advancing education and health. But, above all, she has had the advantage of the ideals and objectives and disciplines built up by the National movement which brought independence.

Nationalism is still the strongest force in Asia. The growth of this nationalism in Asia is obvious. But, even in Europe, it is becoming more and more apparent. There was the terrible nationalism associated with Fascism and Nazism. While that threat was countered, an aggressive nationalism, though of a milder type, still influences the policies of many countries. In many countries of Europe, this is evident in greater or lesser degree. This trend is co-existent with an opposite one towards supra-national unity in Europe as represented by attempts to develop a common market and many common institutions.

Even in Communist countries, nationalism is in evidence. The Soviet Union, greatly influenced by Marxist ideas and their subsequent variations, has also a strong nationalist element in the other countries of Eastern Europe, the force of nationalism is obvious. Even in China, Communism bases itself on nationalism. It might be said that the strength of Communism, wherever it is in practice, is partly due to its association with the national spirit. Where the two are dissociated, Communism is relatively weak, except in so far as it embodies the discontent that exists in under-developed and poverty-stricken countries.

The nationalist urge, in countries which are still under foreign domination, necessarily takes the form of a struggle

for independence. In strong and independent countries, it tends to some extent towards expansionism, though it is somewhat checked by opposing tendencies.

## VII

Thus we see today a clash between impulses towards a larger integration, such as in Europe and elsewhere, and the centrifugal forces representing traditional nationalism. The great development of science and technology and, more particularly, communications, presses more and more towards larger integrations. And it may be presumed that in this, as in other matters, science, representing the basic facts of modern life, will win in the end. The real danger comes from nationalist conflicts which may lead to war.

The possibility of such a conflict is increased by the cold war between the major ideologies in the world today. And yet, behind this supposed conflict of ideologies lies the political rivalry of great nations, each afraid of the other. There are basic differences in outlook and economic doctrine as well as in the domain of liberty and the State between the Communist countries and those that are not Communist. These differences have already lessened somewhat and will probably continue to lessen, and the gap between the two, though it appears to be broad and deep, will diminish. It is not so much ideology which is changing human life, but the growth of science and technology which are constantly moulding social and economic structures. Function influences form. This is so in architecture. It is equally so ultimately in social structures, the form of that structure following its function.

Science and technology are constantly changing functions, and so the social structure has necessarily to adapt its form to these new functions.

Thus, the essential and most revolutionary factor in modern life is not a particular ideology, but technological advance. Where technological change is slow, the old forms continue. An under-developed and backward community has backward forms and social structure which do not allow it to fit in with the modern age of science. But the facts of life cannot be denied and change must come bringing with it other consequences in its train. That change has sometimes been rather sudden and upsetting, but even otherwise those changes come, though more slowly.

In a democratic society, that is, where there is adult suffrage and some kind of parliamentary government, the means are provided for the change of function and even form to some extent. But old established forms and vested interests resist change till it is forced down upon them by circumstances. The "establishment" is always resistant to any change whether it is religious, economic or social.

## VIII

Living is a continual adjustment to changing conditions. Every political, economic or social form has a certain discipline. There is the discipline of religion, and that of social usage, and these include a certain moral or spiritual discipline. When functions and forms change, the older disciplines are weakened and are gradually replaced by new disciplines. The rapidity of technological change in the last half century has made the necessity of social change

greater than ever, and there is a continual maladjustment. In the ancient days, life was simpler and more in contact with Nature, and there was time for reflection and meditation. Now life becomes more and more complex, and there is less and less of quiet thinking. Even where there is leisure, one does not know what to do with it.

This problem of the use of leisure is gradually becoming a major one in the developed countries although it does not affect India at present and will not affect it in the foreseeable future. A life divorced from Nature and more and more dependent upon mechanical devices, begins to lose its savour and even the sense of function leaves it. Moral and spiritual disciplines break up, and some kind of disillusion follows with a feeling that something is wrong with our civilisation. Some people talk of going back to Nature and to the simpler life of the ancient days. But whatever virtue there was in this, there can obviously be no going back, for the world has changed. An individual may take to *sanyasa* with its renunciation of life, but society as a whole cannot do so. It has to base itself on an acceptance of life with all its problems and difficulties and try to make the most of it. If it did not do so, it would perish.

The advance of science and technology makes it definitely possible to solve most of the economic problems of the world and, in particular, to provide the primary necessities of life to everyone all over the world. It holds the promise of higher standards and avenues of cultural development opening out. Today the Welfare State and even a classless society are not the ideals of socialism only, but are accepted by capitalist countries also, even though the approaches are different. Thus, the basic ideals come nearer to each other and there is a possibility of

approaching those objectives even though the methods might be different. These methods will not only be based on some logical theories, but will have to depend upon the background and cultural development of a country or a community—geographical, historical, religious, economic and social. Any real change cannot easily be imposed. It has to grow. A country, especially one with an old civilisation, has deep roots in the past, which cannot be pulled out without great harm even though many weeds in the form of harmful or out-of-date customs and institutions can and should be pulled out. Even as Nature establishes some kind of an equilibrium which cannot be disturbed suddenly without untoward results appearing, so also in a community or a country, it is not easy or desirable to upset old ways of living too suddenly. The attempt to solve a problem in this way might well lead to graver and more difficult problems.

This applies to the external world we live in, much more so does it apply to the inner life of human beings. In dealing with tribal and somewhat primitive societies, it is well known that an attempt at too rapid a change has led to disastrous consequences. The more developed societies may not suffer so much from rapid change, but in the jet age and the coming age of space travel no one knows what biological and other changes may take place.

If that is so externally, then surely even greater changes would take place in the mind, emotions and spirit of man. Man today, as never before in human history, has to live with change as a permanent partner in his activities and his institutions. Indeed he cannot keep pace with this change and though he uses the products of science and technology, he seldom understands them. Education is supposed to develop an integrated human being and to

prepare young people to perform useful functions for society and to take part in collective life. But when that society is changing from day to day, it is difficult to know how to prepare and what to aim at. There is a lack of harmony between a highly technical civilisation and the older forms of social life and the philosophy underlying them. The relationship to Nature changes, and even the relationship to one's own personality undergoes a change. The value of human personality diminishes in a mechanical society. The individual loses himself in the mass and tends to become merely an instrument in a complex set-up which is constantly aiming at social and economic improvements of the group as a whole.

Many of us attach great value to the development and the freedom of the individual. Ideological backgrounds help or hinder in this process. But perhaps the most potent factor in diminishing the value of individual personality is mechanisation and automation.

## IX

We see the effects of these rapid technological changes, more especially in young men and women today. Parents and educators and social workers are troubled because of the divergence between young people and adults. The patterns of behaviour which were held by the adults, are no longer accepted, and there is a rejection of the old moral standards. In extreme cases, there is a tendency to criminality, alcoholism, destructiveness, eroticism in addition to a cynical and negative attitude towards life and work. In a world of constant change and without any

assurance or certainty, the hedonistic principles of life have a strong appeal. The continuity of national culture is threatened and a tendency towards social disintegration becomes evident.

This is perhaps an extreme view and not quite a just estimate of what is happening today. But there can be no doubt that these tendencies are present, more so in the developed and advanced societies than in India or other underdeveloped countries. But it is important to note them because similar forces are likely to affect our life too. Perhaps, all this is a necessary consequence of an age of rapid transition, and a new base of civilisation, fitting in with technology, will be gradually created, and with it will develop new ideologies, new forms of collective life and, indeed, a broader philosophy of life.

I do not know if this is considered too pessimistic a view of what is happening. My own reaction to events in India or the world is not pessimistic and some faith, which I cannot analyse or explain, fills me with hope for the future. Perhaps this is due to the good fortune that has attended me in a large measure. The greatest good fortune has been the tremendous affection of the Indian people, but even when I have gone abroad, I have met with friendship and heart-warming welcomes from the people everywhere. Thus I have developed a great affection for and faith in our own people in India and also respect and affection for the peoples of other lands. I have realised that what one gives, one receives. If one gives affection, it comes back in abundant measure; if it is hatred, then we get that in return. I have seen and felt that people everywhere yearn for peace and goodwill and cooperation. If this is so, as I believe it is, then it should be possible for us to turn the tide of

events from conflict to cooperation, from thoughts of war to the works of peace.

Fear, I think, is probably the greatest evil, because out of fear rise conflict and violence. Violence is a reaction to fear, so also is untruth. In our ancient writings, it is said that the greatest gift that can be given is that of fearlessness—*Abhayadan*. A person who is free from fear can view things in a right perspective and can preserve a certain integrity in mind and actions. Today we see fear enveloping the world and even the greatest and most powerful nations are affected by it. Wealth and power, instead of lessening that element of fear actually increase it. None of us, except saints and supermen, can become absolutely fearless. But we can keep this ideal before us and try to achieve it. Gandhiji's greatest contribution to India was to lessen this sense of fear among our people.

Fearlessness leads to compassion and tolerance. When we think of the Buddha, it is his compassion that overwhelms us; when we think of Ashoka, it is his amazing toleration that pulls us up from our narrow creeds.

The world is full of conflicts, national, international and of race, religion, creed and class. It is absurd to deny or ignore these conflicts, but we can approach them not by way of conflict, but by way of peace and thus seek to resolve them.

## X

Internationally, the major question today is that of world peace. This involves an attempt to solve the great problems and disputes which afflict us. How a solution may come,

it is not for me to say. But I think we should be clear in our minds as to the means we adopt and the way we tread to find the solution. It is often said that the choice today is between war, involving almost total annihilation, and some peaceful solution of these problems. If these are the alternatives, then the choice is clear. Having made that choice, it should follow that everything that adds to the tensions of the world has to be avoided. We must come to the firm conclusion that war today must be ruled out, for it does not even promise victory or the fruits of victory. To live on the verge of war and to practise brinkmanship is, therefore, the absence of wisdom. Even though we may differ from each other, we must refrain from angry criticisms and condemnations; we must realise that it is absurd for any one group to call half the world evil or dominated by evil. It is easy to criticise the capitalist world or the communist world, but both have great virtues if they have also many failings, and both tend to move in the same direction in spite of their inner conflicts, and both are governed by the advance of science and technology. The only course open is for us to accept the world as it is and develop toleration for each other. The old conflicts of mutually exclusive religions gradually ended after bloody wars and a new toleration grew up. There is no reason why toleration should also not grow up between rival economic and social theories. Ultimately the facts of life will decide and influence both. It should be open to each country to develop in its own way, learning from others, and not being imposed on by them. In this way, each ideology will influence the other and be influenced by it.

Nationalism is a healthy and desirable state in a people; when suppressed, it reacts strongly, but when allied to too much power, it may become aggressive and chauvinistic.

Modern nationalism has been a reaction against foreign imperialisms and racialisms.

Racialism still exists in varying degrees in many countries, but it is generally condemned. Only in the Union of South Africa it is the accepted philosophy of the State. It is clear that this is a terrible source of conflict and as it involves domination in its worst form, it must produce bitterness and strong reactions. To leave this conflict to be decided by methods of violence is a counsel of despair, apart from the disastrous consequences which this would bring in its train. It may be that world opinion against racialism will become so strong that no country or group will be able to advocate it or practise it.

Imperialism or colonialism, whatever form it may take, is also completely out of place today in the world and the source of conflict. It exists still in many places and its philosophies influence many minds. But it is a discredited creed and is everywhere on the defensive. A world policy must therefore be to bring about the end of racialism and imperialism and leave countries to work out their own destinies. This might lead to disorder and chaos in some countries, but that will be limited and not affect larger areas and will probably right itself after a while. What is wrong and leads to dangerous consequences today is the attempt of one country to impose its will on another.

Military alliances and the cold war, whatever their justification in the past, lead today to insecurity and fear of war. They prevent the normal development of countries and vitiate the atmosphere of the world. So long as there is a cold war, there will be no toleration. Instead of undeveloped countries being helped to grow and raise standards, military considerations come into play and often

political regimes which are reactionary and disliked by the people are bolstered up, thus adding further to insecurity.

It is unrealistic to suggest that the troubles, conflicts and passions of the world can be removed by some magic wand or pious phrases. But it is totally realistic to recommend a course of action which tends to lessen tensions and ultimately does away with the probability of conflict. Essentially this course of action is a new mental approach followed by political and economic policies in line with it. The Panchsheel, or the Five Principles, about which so much has been said, offer that approach but this approach can only be real if there is a change of mind and spirit and not merely the bandying of words which have lost meaning. Peace is not a physical abstention from war, but an attempt to create a climate of peace all over the world.

## XI

In India we have attempted to follow this policy in international affairs though I cannot say that we have always been successful in doing so. Foreign policies depend ultimately on internal conditions and developments. Internal progress for us, therefore, becomes essential if we are to play any effective part in world affairs. It is even more essential, of course, for our own well-being.

After the First Five Year Plan and two years of the Second Plan, we have made definite progress in many directions, some obvious, others not so apparent. The pace of progress has not been as rapid in some directions as we would have liked it to be, but let us remember that it has been solid and substantial progress. Both in agriculture and

industry that progress is evident and it is ultimately on this that our future will depend.

Education is the base of this progress and considerable attention is being paid now both to the spread of basic education and technical education. Millions of boys and girls are going through school and college courses and hundreds of thousands are being trained in Universities and technical institutes. These figures are only a part of India's population and much remains to be done. But, even so, the numbers are large and as they come out of school and college, they bring a new outlook to the business of their lives. Thus, slowly but inevitably, our social patterns are changing. The greatest and perhaps the most revolutionary change is through the enlargement of women's education. It is these girls and young women who are influencing and will progressively change the whole life of the people of India. For the present these changes have taken place more in cities and towns than in the rural areas, but even our villages are being affected by them and, in the course of another few years, basic education will cover the entire school-going age.

Much is said in criticism of present-day education and nearly all of us have joined in criticising some aspects of it. And yet the fact remains that education is spreading fast and changing the texture of our living.

There is the problem of population. There has been a remarkable increase in population all over the world, and at this pace of increase it is expected that the world population may be anything between 3,500 and 5,000 million by the end of this century. In India, the estimates vary between 600 million and 680 million by the year 2000 A.D. The figure of 600 million is the least that we can

expect, provided we can check the pace of growth to some extent.

There are two aspects of this growth of population. The one with which we are most concerned is that it comes in the way of our economic advance and keeps standards low even though we might be making progress in other directions. The other aspect is that this tremendous world growth of population is eating up the world's resources and industrial materials at a terrific pace. If the entire world functions in this respect as the United States of America is doing today, then probably by the end of the century all the essential materials in the world that are available today will be consumed. That is, of course, unlikely but even if the rate of consumption in other countries is much slower, the available materials cannot last for more than a few hundred years.

Thus two consequences flow: one is that we must check the rate of growth of population and the other, we must find other power sources and materials. Possibly the development of Atomic Energy will provide us with other sources of power. We in India are most concerned with checking the growth of population and this has become a matter not only of importance but of urgency.

## XII

There are two basic facts which we have to keep in mind. One, the tremendous growth of productive capacity in some nations and consequently wealth and power, as a result of the growth of science and technology. The other is the great disparity between these wealthy and powerful

nations and the under-developed nations. This disparity tends to increase and, in fact, has increased considerably in recent years, in spite of the efforts to raise the level of the under-developed nations. If normal economic and other forces are allowed full play, they will make the rich nations richer and more powerful while the others will be struggling painfully to meet their basic needs. Unto those that have, more shall be given. Even within a country, the more developed areas tend to advance more than the other areas.

As a result of this, conflicts and dangers of war between nations arise, and social unrest increases in the under-developed countries. On the one hand, power and wealth are sources of rivalry and conflict; on the other poverty and misery also lead to upsets and conflict. Both result in fear and insecurity. Too much concentration of wealth and power does not bring security and prevents a proper understanding of the forces at play in the world. These disparities, whether between nations or within a nation, therefore, should be lessened.

It is not possible to solve the problems of the nuclear age with the conventional approaches of yesterday. Neither in politics nor in economics can those conventional ideas yield satisfactory results. In international affairs, we see the lack of wisdom in carrying on a cold war with all its accompaniment of fear and hatred, when it is evident that this increases the dangers to humanity and cannot possibly lead to a solution. Nuclear tests are carried on even when eminent scientists tell us that each such test has very harmful consequences in the present and for future generations. Why then are these out-of-date policies pursued which have neither logic nor reason behind them,

apart from any moral principle? One would expect an immediate and unanimous decision to stop all nuclear tests and to proceed with a progressive reduction of armaments. Fear will prevent any kind of unilateral step, but reason should bring about bilateral arrangements which are to the advantage of every country.

This same argument applies to economic theories and approaches, and there is little understanding of the dangers inherent in a world largely consisting of mass poverty with a relatively few affluent countries favourably circumstanced. If it is urgently necessary for the under-developed countries to raise their standards, it is equally necessary, from their own point of view for the richer countries to speed up this process. These problems of today belong to a new world and cannot be solved by the application of old world methods.

It is a tragedy that colossal sums of money should be spent on armaments to the great detriment of social advance in the world. It is an even greater tragedy that the climate of fear and unreason should continue when the way to understanding is open. Understanding does not come through the military approach which can only lead to more fear and tension. I am not blaming any particular country because, to a greater or lesser extent, all countries are in the grip of this climate of fear and cannot wholly disentangle themselves from it. All we can do is to try our utmost to change this climate in our own relations with other countries.

In the early days of capitalism, and, indeed to a large extent even now, the greatest stress was laid on production. That was necessary then. But it became increasingly evident that production by itself does not solve our problems or

lead to happiness and contentment. The passion for riches, for acquisition, for more and more wealth tends to corrupt and to create jealousies and conflicts. If the objective aimed at is social balance in a community or in the world at large, production by itself does not achieve it. Indeed, it tends to create greater imbalances. Thus the problem of equitable distribution and the right use of what is produced becomes important. In the final analysis, what is required is the wisdom how to live and make the most of life for oneself and for the community. Economic policy can no longer be considered as some interpretation of Nature's laws apart from human considerations or moral issues.

### XIII

I have referred to these larger issues repeatedly because we cannot get away from them and they influence even our domestic problems. We are so tied up with inherited ideas that it becomes difficult to consider our problems in their present-day context. Poverty is a degradation, and the obvious reaction is to get rid of it. To talk of freedom in poverty is almost a contradiction in terms. Worst of all, poverty tends to become self-perpetuating. But too much wealth and affluence, whether in an individual or a society, has also its attendant evils which are becoming evident today. The mere piling up of material riches may lead to an emptiness in the inner life of man.

The socialist approach is certainly an economic one, but it tries to take into consideration these other factors also. There is a danger that socialism, while leading to affluence and even equitable distribution, may still miss some of the

significant features of life. It is largely for this reason that stress becomes necessary on the individual.

In India our problems today are essentially of economic development and higher standards of living. We have deliberately laid down as our objective a socialist pattern of society, though we have not precisely defined it. I think it is desirable to avoid precise definitions because they tend to become dogmas and slogans which come in the way of clear thinking in a world which is rapidly changing. But too much vagueness also comes in the way of effective action. There have to be, therefore, definite goals and some clear notions as to how to reach them.

I have suggested previously that each country should develop without any imposition from outside. While help and advice should be welcomed, imposition prevents healthy growth and creates conflict. Therefore, every country should be allowed to fashion its own policy provided it does not do injury to other countries as far as possible. We must accept that none of us has the monopoly of truth and also that what may suit us may not be suitable to others living in different conditions. We must also accept that we have to live in this world with many things that we dislike, and the only influence we should exercise is by our own conduct and policies and by friendly cooperation with others. In spite of the great difference between rival ideologies today, I believe that the points of similarity are growing and circumstances are bringing them nearer to each other. If fear was not present and threats and compulsion not used, this process of coming together will be hastened. This means that, broadly speaking, the *status quo* must be accepted, whether in the political or the economic sphere, as between nations. Problems requiring solution must be dealt with through peaceful methods.

There are conflicts within a nation. There is a difference, however, as in a democratic apparatus with adult suffrage, those conflicts can be solved by normal constitutional methods. On the whole, religious conflicts do not take place now. Racial conflicts are limited to a few areas in the world, though the racial problem remains. In India we have had most distressing spectacles of conflicts based on provincialism or linguism. In the main, however, it is the conflict of class interests that poses problems today, and in such cases vested interests are not easy to displace. Yet we have seen in India powerful vested interests like those of the old Princes and of the big jagirdars, talukdars and zamindars solved by peaceful methods, even though that meant a breakup of a well established system in favour of a privileged few. While, therefore, we must recognise that there is class conflict, there is no reason why we should not deal with it through these peaceful methods. They will only succeed, however, if we have a proper objective in view, clearly understood by the people.

#### XIV

Personally I think that the acquisitive society, which is the base of capitalism, is no longer suited to the present age. It may have been suitable in an earlier period and, undoubtedly, capitalism has great gains to its credit, but the world has outgrown that stage. It is too complex and crowded and we sit almost on each other's threshold. We have to evolve, therefore, a higher order more in keeping with modern trends and conditions and involving not so much competition but much greater cooperation.

Ultimately this should lead to a World State. This can only take place in an atmosphere of freedom for each national group to develop according to its likes without interfering with others.

While an acquisitive society, based on the profit motive, appears to be out of place in the new world that is growing up, it does not mean that there should be no incentives. Incentives will always be necessary though they may not be confined to financial benefits. We have to encourage the spirit of adventure, of invention and of taking risks in order to give an edge and substance to our lives. Private enterprise would still have a large field, but even that should function in a different way and not purely in the acquisitive way. In India we have entered, belatedly, into the phase of industrial revolution. We have done so at a time when parts of the world are in the jet and nuclear age. We have thus, in effect, to proceed simultaneously with both these revolutionary changes and this involves a tremendous burden. We have accepted socialism as our goal not only because it seems to us right and beneficial, but because there is no other way for the solution of our economic problems. It is sometimes said that rapid progress cannot take place by peaceful and democratic methods and that authoritarian and coercive methods have to be adopted. I do not accept this proposition. Indeed, in India today any attempt to discard democratic methods would lead to disruption and would thus put an end to any immediate prospect of progress. From the long term point of view also I believe in the dignity of the individual and in as large a measure of freedom for him as possible, though in a complex society freedom has to be limited lest it injure others.

The mighty task that we have undertaken demands the fullest cooperation from the masses of our people. That cooperation cannot come unless we put forward an objective which is acceptable to them and which promises them results. The change we seek necessitates burdens on our people, even those who can least bear them; unless they realise that they are partners in the building up of a society which will bring them benefits, they will not accept these burdens or give their full cooperation. What is called "free enterprise" will never appeal to the masses of our people; it will lead to the use of our resources often for purposes that are not of primary importance. It will mean the exploitation of the profit motive in which the individual may be interested but not society as a whole.

The strongest urge in the world today is that of social justice and equality. The old feudal system was based on the possession of land by a few and the others living on the verge of existence. No one commends that system today. So also many of the systems prevalent today have lost their hold and are not compatible with either people's thinking or scientific advance.

## XV

The nature of the task that we have to face demands a carefully planned and scientific approach so as to utilise our available resources in the best possible way and to direct the nation's efforts towards our goal. It is curious that in this age of science there are still some people who believe in the haphazard method of private enterprise with individual profit as the dominant motive.

We are in the middle of our Second Five Year Plan and the Third Plan looms ahead of us. We have arrived at a stage when this Plan must lay down definitely the physical goals to be reached and the manner of achieving them. By the end of the Third Plan we hope, as our President pointed out in his address to Parliament, that "a solid foundation will have been laid for future progress in regard to our basic industries, agricultural production and rural development, thus leading to self-reliant and self-generating economy." We do not expect to solve our problems by the end of the Third Plan and there will be many other Five Year Plans succeeding it, but we do aim at breaking this barrier of poverty so that our under-development may not perpetuate itself. If we succeed in that, as I trust we will, then we shall advance at a more rapid pace and will be less dependent on others.

That will involve a heavy burden, but there is no escape from it if we are serious and determined to advance rapidly towards our objectives.

In recent months, some decisions have been taken in regard to land which have evoked some criticism. We see here the class conflict which is inevitable when any major social change takes place. I am sure that we shall resolve this conflict also peacefully and cooperatively as we have previously resolved other such conflicts.

There is, I am convinced, no other way but that of cooperation for our rural population. Multi-purpose cooperatives are essential for them and these should lead to cooperative farming. I do not think that collective farming is suited to India in present circumstances and I would not like our farmers to become indistinguished units in a machine. The fact we should remember is that there are too many people in this country and relatively little

land. The mere fact of controversy over these issues indicates that progress is being made and we are getting out of the economic ruts of ages.

It is not by some mere theory, however good, that we shall enthuse the masses of our cultivators. The essential approach must be to make them understand and cooperate and to develop self-reliance. Hence the importance of giving powers to the village panchayat and the village cooperative. The argument that they might misuse these powers, though it may have some force, has no real validity. The risk has to be taken, as only thus will the people learn through trial and error.

The Community Development Movement in India started six and a half years ago and now covers over 300,000 villages. This is remarkable advance and I think that it will produce and to some extent is producing revolutionary results in the country. I know well its failings, but its successes are even more obvious. Effective results will depend on the measure of the people's association with it. Officials and trained personnel have importance, but the real part will have to be played by the average farmer. I think that a new spirit is spreading in our countryside as a result of this Community Development Scheme.

Whether in land or in industry, or in the governmental apparatus, institutional changes become necessary from time to time as functions change, and a new set of values will replace those that have governed the old acquisitive society based on the profit motive. The full change over must take time, for the problem before us is ultimately to change the thinking and activities of hundreds of millions of people, and to do this democratically by their consent. But the pace of change need not be slow and, indeed, circumstances will not allow of too much gradualness.

## XVI

India today presents a very mixed picture of hope and anguish, of remarkable advances and at the same time of inertia, of a new spirit and also the dead hand of the past and of privilege, of an overall and growing unity and many disruptive tendencies. With all there is a great vitality and a ferment in people's minds and activities. Perhaps, we who live in the middle of this ever-changing scene, do not always realise the full significance of all that is happening. Often outsiders can make a better appraisal of this situation.

It is a remarkable thing that a country and a people rooted in the remote past, who have shown so much resistance to change in the past, should now be marching forward rapidly and with resolute steps. We are making history in India even though we might not be conscious of it.

What will emerge from the labour and the tumults of the present generation? What will tomorrow's India be like, I cannot say. I can only express my hopes and wishes. Naturally, I want India to advance on the material plane, to fulfill her Five Year Plans, to raise the standards of living of her vast population; I want the narrow conflicts of today in the name of religion or caste, language or province, to cease, and a classless and casteless society to be built up where every individual has full opportunity to grow according to his worth and ability. In particular, I hope that the curse of caste will be ended for there cannot be either democracy or socialism on the basis of caste.

Four great religions have influenced India—two emerging from her own thought, Hinduism and Buddhism, and two coming from abroad but establishing themselves

firmly in India, Christianity and Islam. Science today challenges the old concept of religion. But if religion deals not with dogmas and ceremonials, but rather with the higher things of life, there should be no conflict with science or *inter se* between religions. It Might be the high privilege of India to help in bringing about this synthesis. That would be in India's ancient tradition inscribed on Ashoka's Edicts. Let us remember the message of Ashoka:

"The increase of spiritual strength is of many forms.

"But the root is the guarding of one's speech so as to avoid the extolling of one's own religion to the decrying of the religion of another, or speaking lightly of it without occasion or relevance.

"As proper occasions arise, persons of other religions should also be honoured suitably. Acting in this manner, one certainly exalts one's own religionist and also helps persons of other religions. Acting in a contrary manner, one injures one's own religion and also does disservice to the religions of others.

"One who reveres one's own religion and disparages that of another from devotion to one's own religion and to glorify it over all other religions, does injure one's own religion most certainly."

In Ashoka's day, religion covered all kinds of faith and duty. Today we do not quarrel over religion so much but over political and economic matters and ideologies. But we might well follow Ashoka's advice in dealing with people who differ from us in politics or in economics. There was no place for the cold war in Ashoka's mind. There need be none today.

Tomorrow's India will be what we make it by today's labours. I have no doubt that India will progress

industrially and otherwise; that she will advance in science and technology; that our people's standards will rise, that education will spread and that health conditions will be better, and that art and culture will enrich people's lives. We have started on this pilgrimage with strong purpose and good heart, and we shall reach the end of the journey, however long that might be.

But what I am concerned with is not merely our material progress, but the quality and depth of our people. Gaining power through industrial processes, will they lose themselves in the quest of individual wealth and soft living? That would be a tragedy for that would be a negation of what India has stood for in the past and, I think, in the present time also as exemplified by Gandhi. Power is necessary, but wisdom is essential. It is only power with wisdom that is good.

All of us now talk of and demand rights and privileges, but the teaching of the old *dharma* was about duties and obligations. Rights follow duties discharged.

Can we combine the progress of science and technology with this progress of the mind and spirit also? We cannot be untrue to science, because that represents the basic fact of life today. Still less can we be untrue to those essential principles for which India has stood in the past throughout the ages. Let us then pursue our path to industrial progress with all our strength and vigour and, at the same time, remember that material riches without toleration and compassion and wisdom may well turn to dust and ashes. Let us also remember that "Blessed are the Peace-makers."

---

